Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

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1. (Currently Amended) A thin-film magnetic head comprising:

a medium facing surface that faces toward a recording medium;

a read head including: a magnetoresistive element; and a first shield layer and a second shield layer for shielding the magnetoresistive element, the first and second shield layers having portions that are located in regions on a side of the medium facing surface and opposed to each other, the magnetoresistive element being placed between the portions of the shield layers; and

a write head including: a first magnetic layer and a second magnetic layer that are magnetically coupled to each other and include magnetic pole portions opposed to each other and placed in regions on a side of the medium facing surface, each of the magnetic layers including at least one layer; a gap layer provided between the pole portions of the first and second magnetic layers; and a thin-film coil at least part of which is placed between the first and second magnetic layers, the at least part of the coil being insulated from the first and second magnetic layers; wherein

the read head and the write head are placed such that one of the shield layers of the read head and one of the magnetic layers of the write head are opposed to each other; the thin-film magnetic head further comprising;

a magnetism intercepting layer for intercepting magnetism provided between the one of the shield layers and the one of the magnetic layers, and extending to a back gap region, the magnetism intercepting layer having a thickness of 0.2 μm or greater and made of a nonmagnetic metal material that is capable of being formed through plating, wherein

the one of the magnetic layers of the write ~~head,~~ head and the magnetism intercepting layer have substantially the same widths ~~as~~ at the medium facing surface and are formed using a single frame.

2. (Original) The thin-film magnetic head according to claim 1 wherein the nonmagnetic metal material has a Vickers hardness of 400 or greater.

3. (Original) The thin-film magnetic head according to claim 1 wherein the nonmagnetic metal material is made of a single element that is not used for the one of the shield layers and the one of the magnetic layers.

4. (Original) The thin-film magnetic head according to claim 1 wherein the nonmagnetic metal material is platinum.

5-11. (Canceled)